

#### **ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION**

The invention relates to methods and compositions for measuring the rate of gastric emptying in animals, including humans. The methods of the invention measure the rate of stomach emptying by administration of a marker agent in a delayed-release formulation or food vehicle and blood or serum levels of the marker agent are monitored over time. The blood or serum levels of a marker agent reflect the gastric emptying rate. Incorporating such agents in foods also delays the absorption of such agents and serves as a measure of digestion and gastric emptying. These methods may be used to screen for drugs, herbal substances and other compounds that modulate gastric emptying, such as by increasing prokinetic activity of the gastrointestinal tract.